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January 13th, 2009

EXHIBIT 3
DATE 1/13/09
HB 88

TO: Members of the House State Administration Committee

FROM: Joy Bruck, volunteer advocate for AARP Montana

RE: Opposition to HB 88- Revise close of late voter registration

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, my name is Joy Bruck and I'm a volunteer advocate for AARP Montana. AARP is a non-profit non-partisan organization of 165,000 members in this state. We believe the right to vote is the most basic of all political rights.

Same day voter registration is an innovative tool that allows more Montanans to vote. Closing voter registration the Friday before election-day disenfranchises Montana voters. The numbers that the other groups here have brought forward makes the issue clear: Montanans are using election-day voter registration.

As you may remember from yesterday, I have worked as an election judge for many years. The passage in 2005 of election-day registration was a historical step forward in helping more Montanans vote.

The older generations in Montana are some of the most faithful and regular voters. We appreciate the incredible responsibility that is put on County Election Administrators and applaud how they have handled same day registration. We know it wasn't easy, but we truly believe it will get better.

AARP Montana urges you to remember anything resulting in fewer votes being cast is not the right step for Montana. Closing registration the Friday before election-day would result in fewer votes being cast, so we strongly urge you to reject House Bill 88.